prevalence of alcohol consumption is 1.1% in Gujarat and Tripura and highest of 21% in Arunachal Pradesh and Daman and Diu.

It has been informed by the Government of Karnataka that a Task Force on Health and Family Welfare was set up. This Task Force has submitted its final report which recognizes that alcohol-related problems constitute "a serious public health problem and a socio-economic issue" in the State. This Report has made recommendations which cover both issues related to supply reduction and more importantly reduction of demand and harm. It has also been informed that the State Government has constituted a Committee under the Chairmanship of Additional Chief Secretary to go into the recommendations made by the Task Force.

The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment is in the process of developing a National Alcohol and Drug Demand Reduction Strategy in consultation with all stake holders, experts and international agencies in this sector. It is also implementing an NGO-based programme under the Scheme for "Prevention of alcoholism and substance abuse" for preventive education, awareness generation, motivational counselling and rehabilitation of addicts.

Registration of Indian Shipping Companies Abroad

*208. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA: Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that in a trend bodes ill for Indian Shipping Companies have started registering their flagships in offshore registries like Liberia, Panama, Singapore etc. as they feel that operating conditions in India are unfriendly;

(b) whether it is also a fact that Indian controls and heavy taxes are said to be some of the reasons for this as a result of which 13 per cent of the Indian Shipping has already been registered abroad; and

(c) if so, Government's views on this?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING (SHRI VEDPRAKASH GOYAL): (a) and (b) No Sir,

(c) Does not arise.